
Die Mercurii 6. Novembris 1689.

ORdered by the Lords Spiritual
and Temporal in Parliament
Assembled, That the Thanks of this
House be given to the Lord Bishop of
Salisbury, for his Sermon Preached
yesterday before this House; And his
Lordship is hereby desired to Print and
Publish the same.

Jo. Browne Cleric.
Parliamentor.

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A
S E R M O N

Preached before the
House of Peers

IN THE
A B B E Y of W E S T M I N S T E R,
On the 5th. of *November* 1689.

B E I N G
G U N - P O W D E R T R E A S O N - D A Y,
As Likewise
The Day of his Majesties Landing

I N
E N G L A N D.

By the Right Reverend Father in God *GILBERT*
Lord Bishop of *SARUM*.

L O N D O N,
Printed for **Ric. Chiswel** at the *Rose* and *Crown* in
St. Pauls Church-yard. MDCLXXXIX.

Book 1. Printed by the Press of the

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Sermon before the Lords

November 5th. 1689.

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A
SERMON

Preached before the
HOUSE of PEERS,
IN THE
ABBEY of WESTMINSTER,
On the Fifth of November, 1689.

Micah VI. Verse 5.

O my People, remember now what Balak King of Moab consulted, and what Balaam the Son of Beor answered him from Shittim unto Gilgal, that ye may know the Righteousness of the Lord.

THERE is somewhat in Ease and Prosperity, that does so weaken the Minds of Men, who are apt enough, even without that softning, to forget all the Good they receive, and both the Author of it, and the Instruments made use of by him in

it, that it is necessary to call upon them often to reflect on what is past; and that not only on these visible Blessings of God to them, that fall under the observation of all the World, but on the secret methods, as well as the hidden designs of Providence. We are naturally apt to flatter our selves so much, that we do easily imagine, that the happy things which at any time befall us, are the effects of our Wisdom, or the rewards of our Vertues; if a worse principle does not corrupt us, and make us ascribe them either to Fate or Chance.

No Nation had ever such a wonderful series of Blessings, that did so distinguish them from all the World round about them, and gave them such signal Evidences of God's Power and greatness, of his Mercy and severity, of his hatred of Idolatry, as well as of the Authority of their Law and Religion, as the *Jews* had; and yet never was there any Nation under Heaven that was so apt to forget all this, and to revolt from God into that very Idolatry, which they saw him punish so severely in others. Never was there a more amazing Scene than that which they had seen

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in *Egypt*, in the *Red Sea*, and on Mount *Sinai*; the Miracles came so thick one after another, they were both so various and extraordinary, and they were so often and so long repeated, that to one who lays together all that they saw in a course of Forty years, it appears as astonishing a part of that History as any of all the Miracles recorded in it, that a People, which had such a wonderful Evidence given them for their Religion, should yet have been so bent to Idolatry, and so apt to forget God, and all that he had done for them. No Nation now in the World can be in this respect so guilty as they were, because none have seen such Miracles.

But setting aside extraordinary things, it may be affirmed without any arrogant preferring our own Nation to others, or any partiality for our selves, in imagining that we are God's favourite People; that within this last Age (or, if we will carry up the matter to so blessed a Period as the Reformation, that ever since that time) we have had as many of the distinguishing Characters of the *Jewish* Nation upon us, both in the Blessings that we have received from God on the one hand, and in our Ingratitude

gratitude to him on the other, as any under Heaven.

The wonderful conjuncture of Circumstances that concurred to give the Reformation its first footing among us; The terrible but short lived shaking it had in Queen Mary's time, which served only to awaken, and to prepare the Nation to the long and glorious Reign of Queen *Elizabeth*; The discovering and defeating all the Designs that were laid, both against her Person and Government; The signal overthrow of the boasted *Invincible Armada*. The Uniting the Island afterwards under one Head; by which we were delivered from the danger of War within our selves. The many Rebellions of the *Irish*, which gave occasion to so vast a Colony to be sent thither, which rendred that Island that had been an Incumbrance on the Government before, so useful to it. The encrease of our Trade, the many Colonies that we have sent into *America*. The preserving us during our Civil Wars, from being made a prey to our Neighbours; and from Strangers getting footing among us. The putting an end to Anarchy and Enthusiasm in so serene a manner in the

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Year 60. the long continued Peace and Happiness since that time, and the preserving us from our own Follies, and the restraining those Passions which had like to have been fatal to us, if the precipitated haste of our Enemies had not brought us to our Senses again before it was too late.

But to come to the repeated Deliverances of this Auspicious Day, when one Train that was laid to blow up the Nation, in its Head and Representatives, that was so well managed, and brought so near the Critical Minute, was just then discovered and prevented ; and now again, when another that was laid to destroy both Church and State, not only in their Representatives but in Person, has been not indeed discovered, but happily prevented and brought to nothing. For our late Conspirators were not so cautious as to hide the Fuel that was prepared for our Destruction, since we saw them persecute in so many other places of *Europe* at the same time that they talked of Toleration here among us. When, I say, we have had such a Series of Deliverances, as perhaps cannot be matched in History, since that of the *Israelites* coming out of *Egypt* ; there is but one

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thing wanting to make the Parallel complete, and that is our Ingratitude.

The *Israelites* were always murmuring both against God, and against the Instruments whom he had raised up for their Deliverance; and after all that they had seen to render Idolatry detestable to them, yet they were always apt to relapse into it. But here the Parallel agrees too exactly; for it is but too apparent, that upon every new Instance of Gods care of us, we have given also new Instances of our Rebellion and Ingratitude, of our not only forgetting his Mercies, but Repining at them, and of our hardning our selves in our Vices and ill Nature. God charged his Ancient People in the Words before my Text, *O my People what have I done unto thee, and wherein have I wearied thee; testify against me, for I brought thee up out of the Land of Egypt, and redeemed thee out of the House of Servants; and I sent before thee Moses, Aaron, and Miriam.* These Words may be applied to this Nation, in some respect, more literally than to the Jews, for they might have said that God *had wearied them*, by giving them a Religion that had so many troublesome and costly Rites in it; though on the other

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hand these were nothing in Comparison of the Rites of Paganism round about them ; but what can we object to God's methods towards us ? He has given us a plain and simple Religion ; he has delivered us from all Bondage, both in our Spiritual and Temporal Concerns ; and he has sent us mighty Deliverers ; *Aarons* in the Church, and *Moses* and *Miriams* in the State, an *Elizabeth* and a *MARY*, as well as an *Edward*, a *Charles*, and a *WILLIAM*.

But because a general View of too many things may tend to Evaporate our Thoughts, rather than to fix them. There is in the Words that I have read, one Particular set before the *Israelites*, which carries indeed a great variety of Instruction in it : They are called on to remember *what Balak the King of Moab Consulted, and what Balaam the Son of Beor Answered.*

In order to the setting this in its true light, it will be necessary to take a short view of that Transaction. When the *Israelites*, after their long march through the Wilderness, were come near the Border of the Land, which God had given them, two Kings that were in their way, *Sihon King of the Amorites*, and *Og the*

Numb. 21. 21.

the King of *Bashan*, not only refused them passage through their Kingdoms, which they had desired in a Regular and Peaceable way; but not satisfied with this, they carried the Matter further, and brought together their Forces to stop their march; but they were defeated and their Kingdoms were conquered. Upon this *Balak* King of *Moab* apprehended that he might likewise become a Prey to them: so he fancying, according to the Idolatry of that time, that there were Peculiar Gods for every Nation, and that the Successes of a Nation depended on the prevalency of the Deity that protected it, sent to *Balaam*, who was a Prophet held in Veneration in those Parts, hoping that if he could be got to curse them, then the Divinity which inspired him would espouse the Quarrel. It were too long a Digression here to examine *Balaams* Prophecy, who seems to have acknowledged the true God, and to have had Divine Inspirations. He had a strange mixture in him, an Awe of God, and yet a love of Money; he was a Prophet of God, and yet a Servant of the Devil; he either could not or would not falsifie the Divine Enthusiasms that were Imprest on his Mind, and yet he could

could give the most effectual Council possible to *Balak*, for his first debauching the *Israelites*, and then destroying them. The most probable account of *Balaam's* Inspiration is this, that God continued for some Ages after the Flood, to raise up in several Nations Prophets by an immediate Commission to be his Witnesses against Idolatry, and against the Corruption of the Traditional Religion, which was handed down by the first and long-liv'd Patriarchs: But so imperfect was this Conveiance, though the long Lives of the Fathers gave it advantages, which it could never have since that time, that Men did very quickly corrupt both their Religion and their Morals; and in *Abraham's* time Idolatry had got strange footing all the World over: Men in all Ages have had a strange bias to a sensible Religion, and to a visible Object of it. In many of these Nations it is highly probable, that God raised up both Prophets and Preachers of Righteousness, that so they might be without excuse: And as *Noah* warned the Old World, and *Lot* the Men of *Sodom*, before those Terrible Judgments of God which destroyed them fell upon them; so *Melchisedeck* and *Balaam* seem to have been inspired

inspired Persons, in whom God made the last Effay upon these Nations. But with this difference, that the former was a Person that did in all things answer his Character; whereas the other was only passive in his Inspirations; but these had no effect upon himself; so that while he Preached to others he himself was a Reprobate: For though God made such impression on his Imagination, as gave him views of future Events, and furnished him in the expressing them with a due degree of Sublimity of Style, yet these neither came from his Heart, nor could make any Impression upon it. He loved *Balak's* Presents, which are called the *rewards of his Divination*, so well, that he would gladly have done any thing to have deserved them at his hands; yet he was so restrained by the Divine Prohibition, that he refused to go to him at first: But a second Message, carried by more Honourable Messengers, enforced with a Promise of *Promoting him to great honour, and of doing whatsoever he should desire of him*, was a Bait which he could not reject; so his Heart being set on going, God so far gave way to it, that he suffered him to go, that from the Prophecies which he should be forced to Pronounce, there might

Numb 22. 7.

Verse 13.
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Verse 20.

might be a further Declaration made of his Blessing the *Israelites*, not only in the Success and Prosperity that was then to attend upon them, but in that wonderful view that was given him of a Star, that at a great distance of time should shine, and that then a Scepter should rise out of *Israel*, to which all the Nations round about should submit; for out of *Jacob* should be come that was to have Dominion. *Balak* according to his fond and Superstitious Notions, fancied that the offering many Sacrifices, and the giving *Balaam* a new Prospect of the *Israelites* in several Places, would have changed the Matter; and so he gave him three different views of them, at every one of which there were Seven Altars built, and a Bullock and a Ram were offered on every one of these Altars; but all the Preparation that *Balak* made, and all this shifting the Scene so often, had no other Effect, but that reiterated Blessings on the *Israelites* were Pronounced at every time: And when this provoked *Balak* so much, that he would have no more of *Balaam's* Prophecies, he then of himself gave forth the most express and positive one of them all, in favour of the Jewish Nation, of their Success, and of

Numb. 24.
Verse 17. 19.

Numb. 23. 24.

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Numb. 22. 23.

of that vast Glory that should accrue to them, when that Prince, whose appearance should be accompanied with a Star, should come. But though *Balaam*, as he said himself, *had no power to speak any thing but the words which God should put in his mouth*; in which it seems he was so intirely Passive, that he was not at all Master of himself, when he fell into those Trances; yet after those Essays he had vainly made to Curse them, he offer'd an advice to *Balak*, that had a more certain Effect than all the Curses that were desired from him could have had; which was this, he knew well that God's favour to that People was Conditional, and so could last no longer than they should continue observing their Part of the Covenant; therefore he Counsell'd *Balak* to endeavour first to Corrupt their Morals, and then to Debauch them in their Religion; or as it is expressed by the Spirit of God, *Rev. 2. 4. He taught Balak to cast a Stumbling-block before the People of Israel, to eat things Sacrific'd to Idols, and to commit Fornication*; lewd Women were sent in among them, to intice them first to Vice, and then to the Idolatry of *Baal-peor*; the Rites of which were so Indecent, that as the Scripture wraps them
up

up in general words; so it is better to pass them over, than to explain them. This had the desired effect; the People did defile themselves in both; *They sate down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.* But, though God was by this highly provoked, yet he would not deliver them up into the Hands of their Enemies; he sent a Plague among them, by which in one day there fell Four and twenty Thousand. This was done in *Shittim*, which is here mentioned in my Text; but when the Wrath of God had broke out upon them, in so severe a manner, that besides the destruction made by the Plague, *Moses* was commanded by God to *hang up all the Heads of the People against the Sun*; and he charged the Judges to *slay every one of them his Men that were joined unto Baalpeor*; this struck the whole Congregation, so that they were weeping before the Door of the Tabernacle. But so impudent a thing is Vice, when strengthened by Idolatry, that *Zimri*, one of the Princes of *Israel*, brought in a Prostitute before them all, as if he had gloried in that which was his shame. This was an Object that must needs have given Horrour

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Ps. 106.

Numb. 16. 31.

v. 8.

Ps. 112. 8. 9.

Ps. 116. 5.

Prov. 10. 2.

Mat. 1. 19.

to all that saw it, and it raised such Indignation in *Phinebas*, that in a Transport of Zeal he killed them both; upon which the Plague was staid, God was reconciled to his People, and in a Battel which they had soon after this, *Balaam*, that was the Author of this cursed Advice, was slain: This is that transaction which the Prophet calls upon them to remember, and in doing it, to *consider of the Righteousness of the Lord*. Righteousness in the strict notion of the Word, is *Justice*; and in that sence they might, in calling to mind the passages of that story, reflect on God's righteous Judgments in punishing their Fathers, when they had departed from him, in sending a Plague among them; in stopping it upon their Repentance, and upon *Phinebas's* zealous deportment; and in turning the course of his Wrath upon the wicked Instruments that had cast those Temptations in their way, and particularly on *Balaam*, the chief Author of the Counsel. But if *Righteousness* may be taken, as it often is, in a larger sence, for *Goodness* and *Mercy*, then these words import this, That in reflecting on that Story, they should observe God's Goodness to his

his People, in disappointing all the Designs of their Enemies ; in restraining a false Prophet, that would have willingly divined for hire, and prophesied whatsoever *Balak* should have dictated to him ; and afterwards, in not suffering that Corruption, which began to spread among the *Israelites*, to go long unpunished ; but by the early punishing of a few, staying the Progress of the Defection, and upon that zealous performance of *Phinehas*, staying the Plague likewise. Here are eminent Characters both of Justice and Mercy: And therefore, since the People were at this time so apt to fall into Idolatry, it was fit to put them in mind both of the Severity and of the Goodness of God, that in both they might see effectual Reasons to perswade them to serve God, as it is expressed in the following words, in *doing Justice, loving Mercy, and in walking humbly with their God.*

So far I have gone in explaining my Text, as it related to the People of *Israel* ; I come now to make it look towards this Nation, and the Blessings of this Happy day : I shall not stretch the Parallel so far, as to make every thing come within it, or to force any

strained Allusions, but shall only consider such things as are both obvious and easie. It is well known, that when we had got out of the House of Bondage, the neighbouring Nations began to be afraid of us, they combined against us, to enslave and destroy us; they had their false Prophet more entirely at their command, than *Balaam* was at *Balak's*, who was, of his own accord, ready enough to curse us: he needed no Hire to be perswaded to it, his own Interest was deep enough engaged in it. It is true, his Thunders were spent in angry and lofty words, without the designed effect: Wars were indeed raised within and without, and a mighty League was formed above an Age ago, which went on with great success for several years, till it had its Crisis in 88, and then a Fleet, armed with all that either the Blessings or Curses of that See could add to it, came against us, while we seemed to be as Sheep numbred out to the Slaughter, or, at least, appointed to be Slaves; but all this Storm went over, and in it we had many occasions, that invited us to reflect on the Righteousness of the Lord; when all that

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Scene of Curses was spent and turned on them that had denounc'd them against us : Then the open Methods of Enmity proving so unsuccessful, secreter Practices were thought the safer : We were cursed, and devoted to endless Destruction, so that nothing was thought too bad for us ; and by a succession of many Conspiracies, the Life of that Great Princess, upon which our Safety then depended, was struck at ; most of those were well laid, many of them were almost quite ripe, when by unlook'd-for Accidents and Methods they were discovered : At last a Design was laid, in which there was a complicated Train of all the Mischief that could possibly be done us in one minute ; and even that was brought so near its conclusion, that had not the tenderness of a Sister prevailed over her zeal for her Religion, to the preserving her Brother, as is generally believed, the greatest and happiest Nation in *Europe*, had become, in a moment, the most miserable. How far this was concerted among the *Balaks* and *Balaams* of that time, we do not certainly know : But, a Case of this nature being put by one of their Writers some years before,

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in a printed Book, and determined in the Negative, That a Priest was bound not to reveal any such design, if discovered to him in Confession; gives a shrewd indication, that it was then projected among a sort of Men, who have never seemed guilty of the least tenderness of Nature, when Heresie was in the case. But when their Curses proved harmless things, and their Designs were fatal only to themselves, and to their Friends; then they fell on new Methods, which have indeed succeeded better with them. One has been the dividing us among our selves, and the engaging us into such mutual quarrellings, that their assistance might be always some way or other necessary to the Party that was deprest. Thus, though they themselves were the most inconsiderable Party in the Nation, yet they have so managed the matter by shifting sides, as their Interests led them to it; that they who could not have stood it out by their own strength, yet by joining themselves to those who needed such an accession, and were willing to support themselves by it, came not only to preserve themselves, but to make a much more considerable

siderable Figure among us, than without those their Practices and our own Follies, they could ever have pretended to. They had Art enough on the one hand to make one side maintain vigorously some indifferent things, while they could on the other hand engage the other to as obstinate an opposition to them : They knew well, that in this Dispute, which side soever lost, they must needs gain, both by the weakening that it gave us, and by the advantages that it furnished them : For, while we grew afraid only of one another, and angry only at one another ; they were no more lookt after ; and so they had opportunities to work so long under ground and unobserved, that they had almost quite undermined us before we were sensible of our danger : And when they could conceal it no longer, but that the Mask must fall off, they even then could so far work on our mutual Animosities as to make us Instruments for doing half their work : while some were so far deluded, as to be their Tools in the destroying our Civil Liberties ; and others, who had complained of the former, had yet no sooner an opportunity offered

red them, than they struck in to overthrow all the Security that we had for our Religion, under the pretence of enjoying a Toleration, when the price of it was the owning a Dispensing Power, that must needs have devoured all in a little time. So that both sides have deserved by Turns this Reproach; That our Enemies could manage their Passions so, as to graft their own Designs on them, and to make them grow out of them, only with this difference, That the last deceived are certainly the more inexcusable, since they had seen and censured other mens Errors, and yet fell into the same Follies themselves, when the Designs were become more barefac'd; and, by consequence, Errors of that sort were the more Criminal. This we have all felt, so long, that it may be now reasonably expected, that the Experience of past-times, and the publick and Solemn Promises that were made in the late Distress, should now bring us to a right temper, and, that we should now join all our Forces together, for we shall have occasion for our whole strength, while we struggle with such powerful and vigilant Enemies.

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and 3. But the second Artifice, which comes nearer to that in my Text, has been no less successful to Them; than fatal to Us; and that is, The vitiating all our Notions of Religion, and the corrupting the Morals of the whole Nation. It is plain that they thought it was a good step to bring us over to *their Religion*, once to make us have *none of our own*. True Morality can never bear a Religion that dissolves all Duties, and dispences with all Obligations; nor can a sense of Religion, once rightly awak'ned, bear the impositions of Tyranny, Superstition, and Infallibility: Therefore it was necessary for them to propagate Atheism among us, since men that had no Religion could easily be brought to profess that which is next to none, and that agreed best with their Interests. And this they carried on in one respect very avowedly; for in their Books they studied plainly to prove, That men could have no Certainty for the Christian Religion, unless they took it on their word; and so they set themselves to weaken the force of all those Arguments by which the Truth of the Christian Faith is proved, and to put the whole Authority of it

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upon the Testimony of the Church. This was no small comfort to the Atheists, who from the common Principles of Sense saw the unreasonableness of believing or submitting implicitly to the Authority of the Church, and so were glad to be told that this was all the Evidence that could be brought for Christianity it self.

But the debauching our Morals, was that which seemed chiefly necessary for the compleating their Designs; and in this their Agents had too much matter to work upon. The folly and hypocrisie of some, that in the late Times had given great Advantages against the profession of Religion, was a handle that they failed not to make use of, to render all secret Prayer, the reading the Scriptures, and the observation of the Lord's Day, together with all the shews of Piety, ridiculous; Morality was thought the effect of a mean Education, and of a narrow Mind; True Piety was despised as a Cant; The strictness of Virtue, the fidelity to the Vow of Marriage, Chastity, and Sobriety, were put out of countenance, as signs of ill-breeding, or of a weak and superstitious temper. It
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look'd big and gallant to laugh at Religion, to despise the Worship of God, to affront those that Ministred in Holy Things, and to set up for the most avowed Disorders on that Day which is dedicated to the Worship of God. The open practice of the blackest Vices, was a good step to assure a man of their favour, and to make him pass for one on whom they could depend. Instruments of Vice were ready to carry on the Design: and, as if we had been to be drawn to their Idolatry by the same sort of persons that were sent in by *Balak* to corrupt the *Israalites*, their *Balaks* had likewise their *Moabitish* Women to send among us; which was practis'd almost as barefacedly as when *Zimri* brought in *Cosbi* before the door of the Tabernacle in the face of the whole Congregation.

This was a Train that being once laid, and having taken fire, could not but prove fatal to a Nation that is but too apt to be corrupted; and the effects of it we feel to this day: For Vice having over-run us so entirely as once it did, we cannot be soon freed from so infectious a Disease; which, wheresoever it once takes root, drives it so deep, that it

cannot be easily extirpated. When a Nation is once given up to pleasure, and to a profuseness of living, to falshood and Treachery, and to all the arts of dissembling; and supplanting one another; it must be the work of an Age to bring men back to a decent Frugality and Sobriety, to an exactness of Truth, and a strictness of Virtue. Nature will be long of the side of Pleasure and Interest; these things being soon learned, and hard ever forgotten.

Out of a due reflection on all these things, we must come at last to know the Righteousness of the Lord: God has disappointed the Councils of our Enemies, and made all their Designs vain. They have been taken in their own Craft, and in the Net which they laid for us was their own foot taken. In every step that they made, a Spirit of God and sanctification seemed us have been poured out upon them. I need not repeat things that shall still be fresh in all your memories, and I hope will be so long; for we must ever acknowledge, that we owe our Preservation and Deliverance much more to Their Folly, than to Our own Wisdom. When we were bro-

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ken to pieces, they used Arts on design indeed to divide us further, but they helped to reconcile us: When we were guilty, even to madness, of believing every Promise that they made us, they took care to let us see how little regard they themselves had to any of them: When we could not believe that they would break any of our Laws, they broke through them all at once, and shewed us what feeble things either Promises or Laws are, when Heresie stands in their way. And thus God in his just and righteous Judgments suffered them so far to precipitate all matters, that they ruined their own designs by their over-driving them.

We must have acknowledged that God had been just and righteous, if he had delivered us over as a prey unto them. We had by our contempt of the Gospel, and by the ill use we had made of all his Mercies, and of all former Deliverances, provoked him to cast us off; and when we consider the extreme Miseries into which he has cast other Churches, the long Oppression, and the hard struggle through which Scotland has pass'd, and the pangs in which Ireland continues still, being

ing now a Scene of Blood and Misery, and like to be so yet for some time, if we do not more effectually interpose for bringing their Deliverance to a quicker Conclusion ; and if we compare with all this, the gentle Visitation that we have had, and that has pass'd over us in so easie and harmles a manner, that few broke their sleep, or interrupted their method of living for it : We must, in our reflections on these things, change the signification of the word *Righteousness*, and instead of using it in the sense that imports *strict Justice*, we must take it in the other that imports *Mercy and Goodness* ; for who can reflect on these *Two Fifts of November*, without adoring the riches of God's Mercy and Goodness to us in them both ? The former was in it self a great Deliverance, but its Consequences were not so signal as might have been expected. If that cursed Train had wrought the designed Effect, it had been indeed the most fatal Blow that ever was given : but after all, the Nation, tho' cast by it into a most dreadful Convulsion, would probably have had strength enough to have recovered it self ; the Crime would have been revenged, and
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the Nation for ever purged from all such Instruments of Cruelty. The Circumstances of the Discovery, and the Judgments of God on the Conspirators, had particular Characters of his Righteousness in them, as the prevarications and denials of the Criminals had also their Characters of that cursed School in which they had learned the depths of Satan. The whole thing was such a Contexture of the Wickedness of Man on the One hand, and of the Mercy and Goodness of God on the Other, as is indeed without an Example in the Histories of former Times.

But without derogating from the Blessing of such a Wonderful Preservation, it may be affirmed, That as the Danger which we lately run was greater, so by Consequence, the Deliverance which had its beginning this day, is not only the fresher Blessing, and so the more sensible to us; but is likewise the more Important in it self of the two. The *Gunpowder-Treason* was a Personal thing, but the late Conspiracy was National: The former was levelled at the person of one King, and some of the Branches of the Royal Family, but the latter was against the Crown

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it self; by which one half of that Authority that belongs to it, was to have been surrendered up to *Rome*, and the other half must have become tributary to *France*. Our Religion must indeed have suffered highly by the one; but it was to have been quite extirpated by the other. A great many had perished in a quick and sudden fire by the one; whereas the end of the other would have been, that we must all have languished in such slow fires as Inquisitors might have made for us, or under the studied Cruelties of Dragoons, according to the *French* Pattern, if we would not have consigned our selves over to Everlasting Burnings, by renouncing our Religion. Our Laws and Liberties might have suffered in the One, tho' *Spain* at that time was not in a condition to have made so great a Conquest: But all must have gone now, when they had so vast a Power so near them as *France* is, to have supported and compleated that Destruction of our Liberties which was so barefacedly begun, and that had already made so great a progress among us.

And

And when I have named *France*, I have said all that is necessary to give you a Compleat Idea of the Blackest Tyranny over Mens Consciences, Persons, and Estates, that can possibly be imagined, where every Thing that the Subject possesses is at the Mercy of a boundless Power, and of a Severity that has no mixtures either of Truth or Goodness to govern or allay it; and by which Subjects are treated with as much Cruelty, as Enemies are with Barbarity; That has broke thro all that is Sacred among Men, and has bid Defiance both to Heaven and Earth. This is a short view of that from which we are now a second time delivered. I need not enlarge on the particular Characters of the Hand of God in our Deliverance. These were too visible not to have been observed by all Men, and they are yet too fresh in our Memories to be forgotten by any; but that which few are apt either to reflect on, or to remember, is the Design of Heaven in all this, that so we may understand the *loving Kindness*, as well as the *Righteousness of the Lord* in it.

We had by our Sins, and our Divisions, brought our selves very low, we had provoked God, and irritated one another, therefore he

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has made us to see and feel the Effects both of our Sins and Follies, that so we may be brought to repent of the one, and to correct the other.

Let us then resolve to turn to God in good earnest; and not to provoke him any more, lest if we stir up his Wrath again against us, his Displeasure break out upon us in as terrible a manner as has been hitherto again and again designed by our Enemies, but still prevented by his watchful Providence.

Let us grow ashamed of those Vices which have so dispirited and corrupted the Nation, that we were both fit for Destruction, and had made our selves an easy Prey to our Enemies, being so shamefully degenerated from the Vertues of our Ancestors. Let us compose our Minds to foster Thoughts of one another, that those Animosities which have arisen from some small Diversities in Opinions and Ceremonies, may be allayed, and that we may make such Observations on the Practices of our Enemies, as from these to form righter Judgments of Things, and so come to such temperate Resolutions, as to love one another; at least, if we cannot be so wise, or so happy as to agree all our Differences.

And

And let us in a more particular manner rejoice in the Goodness of God, who now gives us the hopes of happy Days, under the Man whom he has made so strong for Himself, whom he made first the Instrument of saving the best Church and People upon Earth after our own, and who now again has been put on to preserve and rescue us, as if he were born to be the Deliverer and Darling of Mankind. God be blessed for it, we have now a King and Queen, whose Examples we hope shall have as great an Influence over us for making us truly Good, as their Government has for making us really Happy.

Let us then study to be Peaceable and Obedient to them, and thankful to God for them, and then we need not fear what either the Balaks or the Balaams, that are contriving our Destruction, and consulting the Methods of doing it, can project or set on foot against us. For if we are at peace with God, and united at Home, we may assure our selves, that the course of Blessings which has hitherto followed Him, whom God in his Providence has set over us, shall not be interrupted, but by a glorious Progress of Triumphs it shall be carried on, till both the Balak that is now set

on our Destruction, shall fall before him, and those Balaams that divine for her, and the prophesy falsly, be put to confusion: Which God of his great Mercy grant, for the glory of his great Name, through Jesus Christ Amen.

F I N I S.

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